

from the Auth

See Mr Harris' note
at back of Title

Mr. Hilliard's
S E R M O N,
AT THE
ORDINATION
OF
Mr. Andrews.



A
S E R M O N

DELIVERED

DECEMBER 10, 1788,

AT THE

O R D I N A T I O N

OF THE

REV. J O H N A N D R E W S,

TO THE CARE OF THE

FIRST CHURCH AND SOCIETY

I N

N E W B U R Y P O R T,

AS A

COLLEAGUE-PASTOR

WITH THE

REV. T H O M A S C A R Y.

By TIMOTHY HILLIARD, A.M.

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN

C A M B R I D G E.

Published at the Desire of the Church and Society.

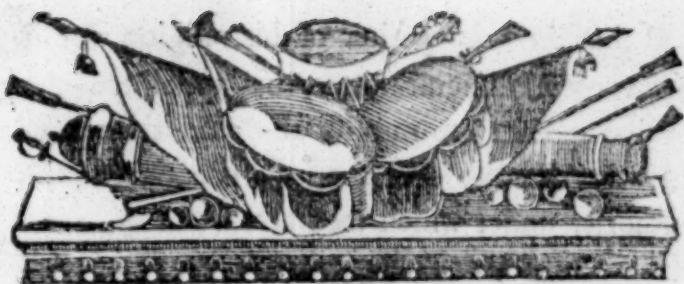
N E W B U R Y P O R T:

PRINTED BY JOHN MYCALL. MDCCLXXXIX.

T. M. Harris is happy in being able
to rank the author of this excellent
sermon among his particular Friends.
- So long as the Christian & the Scholar
shall be valuable characters, Mr. Willard
will be highly esteemed & beloved.

Camb. Feb. 8. 1789.





AN
ORDINATION SERMON.

PHILIPPIANS, I. 17.

—KNOWING THAT I AM SET
FOR THE DEFENCE OF
THE GOSPEL.



OUR divine LORD and SAVIOUR fully evinced the truth of his mission, by the excellency of his doctrines and laws, and the wonderful works which he performed. He was a most diligent, zealous and faithful Preacher, inasmuch that it might justly be said of him, NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN. As Christ clearly foresaw that his personal ministry would be short,

and that the propagation of his religion would be a most difficult work, he appointed the twelve apostles, to publish the glad tidings of salvation, and to give proper credentials of the authority under which they acted.

DURING our Lord's ministry, the Gospel was confined to the Jewish nation ; but before his ascension, he commissioned his apostles to go forth and disciple ALL NATIONS, giving them the fullest assurance, that his presence should always be with them.

THE religion of Jesus, being most opposite to the lusts and prejudices of mankind, was rejected by many with the utmost disdain. The apostles of our Lord were surrounded with enemies on every side, and the cause in which they were engaged, seemed in danger of utter ruin.

AMONG those who attempted the subversion of christianity, none was more zealous than Saul of Tarsus. He persecuted the christians, even to strange cities, and used every possible effort to extirpate their name. Amidst all his rage and fury, a radiant light from heaven shone upon him, his sentiments and views were chang-

ed, and he was employed, as a **CHOSEN VESSEL** to carry the gospel among the Gentiles. Having been educated at the feet of Gamaliel, and versed in all the wisdom and learning of the age, he was able to combat the Jewish Doctors and the Pagan Philosophers with their own weapons. His miraculous conversion is a standing proof, in all ages, of the truth of christianity : For if the fullest evidence had not been exhibited to his mind, it is incredible that all his former prejudices should have vanished in a moment, and that he should so zealously have espoused a cause which exposed him to obloquy and contempt from the world. Can it be supposed that he had an aversion to ease, plenty, and life itself ; and that he was in love with stripes and imprisonments, and every species of suffering ? “ If any person in the world could ever prove himself sincere, St. Paul did so, when he left his old religion, to which he was attached by the violent prejudices of a bigotted education, and all the worldly comforts which he enjoyed, and embraced a new system which he foresaw would bring upon him the greatest evils of life, and untimely death.”

THIS apostle was a most eminent instrument of the propagation and **DEFENCE** of the christian

religion in the world. His preaching and writings are admirably adapted to promote this important design; and he is justly celebrated as a prime minister "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." The nature and design of his office, are summed up in the concise language of our text, **KNOWING THAT I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL.** For this purpose he was made a signal monument of the power and grace of the Redeemer, and all his views centered in this single point.

Now, although no man can pretend to such an **EXTRAORDINARY** and **MIRACULOUS CONVERSION**, or claim an **UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION** from the apostles, without the most arrogant presumption; yet it is the business of the ministers of Christ in all ages of the church, to employ their best abilities in **DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL.**

For the illustration of the subject before us, it will be proper to consider the object of this **DEFENCE—THE GOSPEL**; the manner in which it may be successfully **DEFENDED**; and some of the principal qualifications which are requisite for this purpose. Let us briefly consider the object to be **DEFENDED, THE GOSPEL.**

THIS signifies glad tidings of great joy which were to be to all people, agreeably to the word in the Greek. It is observed that the Saxon word, *gospel*, signifies, WELCOME NEWS: It brings us the news of an Almighty Friend and compassionate Saviour, who came from heaven to deliver us from the condemning sentence of the Divine Law, and to restore us to the image and favor of our Maker. The word GOSPEL often intends the whole christian system, every thing which we are required to believe and practice in order to obtain pardon and everlasting life. In this sense the apostle uses the word in the text. He was called to this important office, and endowed with special powers to DEFEND that dispensation of religion which Christ had set up in the world.

MINISTERS, in all succeeding ages, are likewise to DEFEND, not "the doctrines and commandments of men," not those decrees and formularies which have been established by Councils and Fathers, but the plain and important truths contained in the New-Testament.

THE various sects and parties into which the Christian Church has been divided, have all indeed held up their distinguishing sentiments, as

the true GOSPEL OF CHRIST, and have been feverally apt to imagine that THEY ONLY had discovered "the narrow way which leads to life." Systems most contrary and opposite to each other, as well as to the Gospel itself, have been palmed upon this divine institution, and urged upon the consciences of men as indispensibly necessary to salvation.

MINISTERS, whose business it is to DEFEND THE GOSPEL, ought never to enlist themselves under any other banner than that of Christ. It is inconsistent with the dignity of their character, to call any man FATHER OR MASTER, on earth. It is of mischievous consequence to denominate themselves after any early reformer, however eminent in his day. If christians were reprehensible in primitive times, for saying as some did, I AM OF PAUL, and I OF APOLLOS, &c.* how can any be justified now, in following *Luther* or *Calvin*, *Zuinglius*, *Melancthon* or *Arminius*, who were mere fallible, uninspired men, and lived in an age when mankind were just emerging from the ignorance and superstition of Popery? If ministers should spend their time in DEFENCE of the distinguishing tenets of any of these sects, it would be impossible for them fully to answer the end of their appointment. In

* 1 Corinthians i. 12.

this care, tho' they might produce some "gold and silver," there would be a mixture of "wood, hay, and stubble." Their concern must be to defend the pure, uncorrupted doctrines of Christ, as they are recorded in the sacred pages. The gospel is a deposit committed to their trust, for the honor and interest of which they must be deeply concerned. This is a precious and invaluable treasure, which they are to distribute for the spiritual benefit of those committed to their care,

THEY are to proclaim the good news and glad tidings of salvation; and to urge men, by every possible motive, to attend to their everlasting concerns. Those truths which respect Jesus Christ, the glorious Mediator, and the method of salvation through him, will always claim their particular attention. A minister, who confines himself to disquisitions on moral subjects, and neglects to urge the duties of religion by evangelical motives, may perhaps defend the systems of *Socrates* and *Plato*, but has forgotten that he was SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL,

ST. PAUL appears to have had the most exalted ideas of the peculiar and distinguishing

doctrines of the gospel, when he says to the Corinthians, I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* With respect to himself and his brethren he observes, we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.† The meaning of these resolutions is not, that in their preaching they always dwelt upon the person and offices of Christ, his mediation, death and resurrection, &c. but they preached and defended his religion, in opposition to every other system.

• WHILE ministers explain the LAWS of the Redeemer's kingdom, and urge men to a compliance with the duties of piety and justice, benevolence and sobriety, by those powerful motives suggested in the gospel, they may, with the utmost propriety, be said to PREACH CHRIST. St. Paul, when he was brought before Felix the Roman Governor, discoursed concerning THE FAITH OF CHRIST; and the subjects on which he reasoned, were righteousness, temperance and a future judgment.¶

CHRIST must be represented as a Lawgiver, as well as a Saviour, and as a PREACHER OF

* 1 Corinthians ii. 2. † 2 Corinthians iv. 5.

¶ Acts xxiv. [25.

RIGHTEOUSNESS, who has given us a most noble and complete system of morals, enforced by the most substantial and worthy motives. The doctrines and precepts, the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, are all of the utmost importance in the œconomy of our salvation, and must be held up to view by those who ARE SET FOR ITS DEFENCE.

It is not safe for the ministers of Christ to select some particular truths which happen to be peculiarly coincident with their own taste and temper, and to spend all their time in DEFENCE of these, to the neglect of other parts of the system; but the "whole counsel of God" so far as they know it, is to be declared and represented in the most engaging view.—If a person, says one, who is placed in a garrison to defend it, busies himself in securing such parts of the fortification as are most inaccessible and out of danger, and neglects others which are weakest, and where the enemy may do him most mischief, he shews himself very unfit for his post. And so in like manner, where men's zeal is carried out in DEFENCE of very abstruse matters, which at best it is disputable whether there is any truth in them, and at the same time are secure and calm with respect to such doctrines as tend directly to

weaken men's endeavours after holiness and virtue; or if their DEFENCE is so wholly and virulently employed about matters of speculation, as to neglect, and, it may be, destroy charity, it is evident they are very unfit to be SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL. And however God may send them in other respects, there is little reason to think that He raises them up for any such purpose as they may be apt to imagine.*

WE are, in the next place, to consider the *manner* in which the Gospel may be most successfully *defended*.

As the religion of Jesus is addressed to the reason and consciences of men, it is evident that all methods to DEFEND it, besides those of argument and persuasion, must be contrary to his will and injurious to his cause. || His "kingdom is not of this world." No violent, coercive measures were adopted to erect it at first, nor can they, in any period, subserve its interests.

* MR. PEIRCE,

|| The word APOLOGIA, which we render apology, properly signifies, to plead any cause, and to adduce the several arguments by which it is supported. See Acts xxii. 1. xxv. 16.

CHRISTIANS, indeed, forgetting the nature of their religion, and the example of their compassionate Savior, have called in the powers of the world, to establish their particular systems. Their angry passions have been inflamed against their brethren, because they could not see with their eyes; and the church of Christ for several ages, appeared like an ACELDAMA, a FIELD OF BLOOD. Immense multitudes have fallen sacrifices to the unrelenting hand of persecution. The rage and fury which the professed disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus have exercised towards each other, have been infinitely more prejudicial to his cause, than all the attacks of its avowed enemies.—Since the RESURRECTION OF LETTERS, and the diffusion of a spirit of enquiry, this intolerant temper has been gradually declining; and it is most devoutly to be wished that it may be buried in everlasting oblivion.

ST. PAUL, who was, in an eminent sense, SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, confined himself to those methods which are adapted to enlighten the mind and reform the heart. He reasoned with men on the momentous concerns of religion and another world. He claimed no dominion over the faith and consciences of his hearers; but exhibited the truths of the

Gospel in the strongest point of view, accompanied with such proofs and attestations as were best adapted to carry conviction: He reasoned with the Jews, from the scriptures of the Old Testament, alledging that many of the ancient prophecies were exactly fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Among those who were destitute of the oracles of God, he reasoned on the perfections and providence of the one Supreme Deity, and the admirable display of his wisdom and benevolence in the advent of his best beloved Son. He held up to their view the noble discoveries of the Gospel, and urged their acceptance of a crucified Saviour, with all that zeal and ardor, which a tender concern for their everlasting happiness could inspire. In this important work, God was pleased to bear him abundant testimony by "divers signs and miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost." In defence of the truth, he employed his utmost abilities, endured the most grievous sufferings, and finally sacrificed his life.

IN a mode similar to this, so far as circumstances will allow, ministers, in all ages, are to DEFEND THE GOSPEL. Though the enemies of this divine institution are few, compared with what they were in primitive times; yet there are many, in the present age, who have fallen into

INFIDELITY and SCEPTICISM. They pretend either that reason is a sufficient guide to future glory, or that christianity is a system above human comprehension, or that it is not supported by authentic evidence.—Men indeed, of the greatest abilities and learning, have appeared IN DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, and have argued the cause beyond a possibility of a reasonable reply. But unbelievers still persist in their opposition, and retail the same objections which have been urged a hundred times before, and as often refuted. If they want ability or inclination to reason on the subject, they have recourse to banter and ridicule, as if religion, on which our everlasting happiness depends, was a proper subject of jest and raillery. Others, who are not infidels in speculation, have fallen into a state of total QUIETISM and INDIFFERENCE with respect to religion. They will not be at the pains to enquire after truth, nor to attend upon the ordinances which Christ has established in his Church. It concerns, therefore, the ministers of Christ to DEFEND THE GOSPEL, by proving the purity and excellency of its doctrines and laws ; by shewing that it is a dispensation worthy of God for its Author, and admirably adapted to the circumstances of mankind. By pointing out the insufficiency of reason under

its greatest improvements to investigate many important truths, they are to evince that the gospel is a most rich and invaluable blessing. They are to vindicate the doctrines of revelation from the misrepresentations of ignorant and designing men ; to detect and expose their fallacious reasonings, and to establish the truth on its proper basis.

WHOEVER undertakes to DEFEND THE GOSPEL, must lay much stress upon its *internal evidence*. Without this no external proofs would be sufficient to persuade men to embrace it. But if they can be convinced that its doctrines are all "according to godliness," fitted to purify and refine our nature, and to assimilate us to the pattern of perfection, their minds will be happily prepared for the admission of that evidence which arises from miracles and the fulfilment of prophecies. If they see that its precepts are all "holy, just and good ;" and that the blessings which it ensures, are inconceivably great, they will easily be led to acknowledge its divine original.

THOUGH miraculous powers have long since been withdrawn from the church, and no man can now give those authentic proofs of his mission which St. Paul did, yet ministers, in every

age; are to appeal to the miracles of Christ and his apostles, as standing credentials of the christian revelation. That these astonishing works were performed, we have as good evidence as of other past facts and transactions; and they afford an easy and compendious proof of revelation. For if they were above the reach of the laws of nature, if the immediate power of God was visible in them, it will follow, either that the doctrines were true which they were designed to establish, or that a Being of infinite wisdom and benevolence has set his seal to a lie.

FURTHER, they who are SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, may urge the exact accomplishment of a great variety of prophecies as a substantial proof of the truth of revelation. The predictions respecting the incarnation and life, the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, were so compleatly accomplished, that whoever compares them with those important events, will find conviction forcing itself upon his mind. Those prophecies also, which relate to the FOUR GREAT MONARCHIES which were to rise in succession; to the MAN OF SIN who should exalt himself above all that is called God; to the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of God's chosen people among all nations, afford the most complete and satisfactory evidence

that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Some of these important events which were pointed out by the spirit of prophecy four thousand years ago, are accomplished in our own times, so that we have a kind of OCULAR DEMONSTRATION of the truth of the Gospel.* Since these prophecies refer to events which no human sagacity could foresee, they must have been suggested by that glorious Being to whom all things are "naked and open."

Now the ministers of the Gospel must be ready TO DEFEND IT by adducing those proofs on which the truth of it rests. As occasion requires, they must "be ready to give a reason of their hope, and to shew that they have not followed cunningly devised fables." It is their duty to vindicate and support the Gospel, not only against the attacks of infidels, but also of all others who attempt the perversion of it.—If any doctrines are palmed upon the scriptures which are dishonourary to God, and hazardous to the souls of men, it is the province of the ministers of Christ to bear testimony against them. If any system is held up which directly tends to sap the foundations of moral virtue—to cut the sinews of exertion, and to lead men to indulge

* The prophecies respecting the Jews, delivered by Moses, are referred to.

a fond hope of being saved in their sins, they cannot connive at it without a manifest violation of their duty to their Divine Master.

IN short, they are to DEFEND THE GOSPEL, by exhibiting the important truths of it to the people, in a clear and convincing view. All their discourses must be rational and scriptural, plain and practical. "By manifestation of the truth, they are to commend themselves to the consciences of men. As spiritual watchmen, they are to warn the people of the extreme danger of persisting in their infidelity and wickedness, and to urge them by the most pressing importunity to flee to the city of refuge. As "Stewards of the mysteries of God," they are to dispense the rich provisions of his house, and "give to every man his portion in due season." As Ambassadors of the Prince of peace, they are to proclaim the terms of pardon and life, and "to beseech men in his stead, to be reconciled to God."

It is evident from this brief view of the pastoral office, that it is important and difficult, and that special qualifications are necessary for the discharge of it. This is the last branch of our subject, to consider some of the principal

qualifications which are necessary for THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL.

ONE thing indispensibly necessary, is, an intimate acquaintance with that Gospel which they are to DEFEND. They must be "Scribes well instructed to the kingdom of God." Furnished with clear ideas of the doctrines of revelation, and the several proofs on which the truth of it rests, they will be able to plead the cause of their divine Lord in the most effectual manner. But if their acquaintance with the Gospel is slight and superficial, if they have never considered the objections advanced by its adversaries, they will presently be foiled and overcome, and religion itself will suffer on their account.

IN the present enlightened age of the world, when every subject is canvassed with the utmost freedom, and Deistical books are circulated, it is of the utmost importance that the ministers of religion should be amply furnished with knowledge in their profession.

SUCH a degree of theological knowledge as will qualify men to DEFEND THE GOSPEL with success, must be the effect of study and close application. Since the days of Inspiration, no man can rationally expect any extraordinary

communications of light. If any one should make pretensions to these, he must produce satisfactory evidence of his mission, before he can have any title to credit.

SINCE the will of God is clearly revealed in the scriptures, our knowledge of religion is to be derived principally from this sacred source: Those, therefore, who are SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, must, with diligence and impartiality, apply themselves to the study of the oracles of God. The investigation of truth must employ much of their time and attention. It will be of no small advantage, to read the scriptures in those languages in which they were originally written, and to cultivate an acquaintance with all those branches of science which have any connection with Theology.

HOWEVER some may have suggested, that no advances have been made in doctrinal knowledge of the scriptures, for some centuries, I am fully persuaded that this sacred science is capable of *progressive improvement*. As one observes, Grammarians, Philosophers and Historians have searched the scriptures, and their search has been amply rewarded. An enlarged comprehension of the scheme of Providence, and the course of human affairs, has enabled some

to attain that sense which was too profound for ordinary minds. An intimate acquaintance with ancient languages and manners, has expounded the meaning of many passages which have been misunderstood and misrepresented ; and sacred criticism, proceeding on sound principles, and conducted by men of erudition and information, has, in numberless instances, rescued the scriptures from the charge of absurdity and inconsistency, and has demonstrated the effectual care with which Providence has preserved the oracles, that were first given by inspiration of God, from destruction or from gross corruptions. The different interpretations which the same texts had received in the eagerness of controversy, have corrected one another ; and the diligence and acuteness with which theological writers have sifted the opinions of their adversaries, have assisted candid minds in apprehending the truth. Historical researches have elucidated prophecy, and the beauty of the poetical parts of scripture, as well as the exactness of those that are narrative, have received many delightful and striking illustrations from the reports of those whom the extension of modern commerce has carried to visit parts of the world that are far removed from us.*

* Dr. HILLS' sermon before the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge.

ANOTHER qualification necessary for THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, is, courage or christian fortitude. Ministers are to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." In the execution of their office, they must expect much opposition from men of corrupt minds. Fidelity to their important trust, will sometimes inflame men's angry passions, and give rise to the most opprobrious and abusive language. "Some will misconstrue their designs; others will censure where they ought to applaud. Some in whom they rejoiced as the seeds of their ministry, will fall into the snare of the devil, and turn from the holy commandment. In the course of a few years, they will probably see those who were once warm friends, desert them through fickleness or caprice, or unreasonable disgusts which they cannot account for or prevent."

THE numerous difficulties with which they must conflict, will be apt to break their spirits and disqualify them for their work, unless they are possessed of a good share of fortitude and resolution. St. Paul has exhibited a noble example of this ministerial virtue. Amidst the shock of the most violent temptations, he retained his firmness and fortitude, and "counted not his life dear to him, that he might finish

his course with joy and the ministry which he had received of the Lord."

ALL who are SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, must, in like manner, hold fast their integrity, whatever the consequences may be with respect to the opinion of the world. In this way they cannot fail to secure that inestimable pleasure which arises from the approbation of their own minds; they will also obtain the esteem of all the wise and good, and be at last entitled to the plaudit of their glorious Master, their final Judge.

FURTHER, a candid benevolent temper is a bright ornament of the ministerial character. The Gospel indispenfibly requires this of ALL its professors. The example of Christ and his apostles most forcibly recommend it. The ministers of the Gospel, being all the disciples of the same Master, and embarked in the same glorious cause, ought ever to cultivate a sincere affection for one another, and for all such as "call on the name of the Lord." Narrow bigotted sentiments and views will tarnish the lustre of valuable accomplishments, and contract the sphere of their usefulness in the world.

It is demonstrably certain that real piety is not confined to any particular denomination of christians, and that those principles which reform the heart and the life, can never prove destructive to the souls of men. "The worst heresy which ever existed, is, an immoral and wicked life."

AMIDST all the variety of sects and parties into which christians have been divided, they have been generally agreed with respect to the capital and most important truths of religion. All christians believe the existence and perfections of the one supreme God, the Author and Supporter of the universe, and his providential government of the world ; they believe the advent of his best beloved Son to redeem and save a perishing world ; they own that salvation is by grace through faith ; that a divine influence on the mind is necessary to produce and cultivate a holy and heavenly temper ; that Christ having been "delivered for our offences, was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father," was vested with supreme dominion, and constituted the Judge of quick and dead ; they believe the resurrection of the dead and a future retribution according to the deeds done in the body.

NOTWITHSTANDING their disagreement in some other matters, with such sentiments they may cultivate a supreme affection to God ; they may unite in their regards to Him who is the Brightness of the Father's glory, and the express Image of his person ;" they may "love one another with a pure heart fervently," and "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

WHILE the ministers of religion are firm in DEFENCE of what they apprehend to be the truth, they cannot condemn their brethren who judge differently, without a manifest violation of that CHARITY WHICH NEVER FAILETH.

It must be added, that ministers ought to be men of unaffected piety and devotion. Sensible of the difficulty and importance of their work, they are frequently to repair to the Father of lights for his gracious direction and influence. As "the hearts of all men are in his hand," and he alone "can teach his people to profit," they are to look ultimately to him for the success of all their labors.

WITHOUT an entire and absolute dependance on God, and frequent applications to him "for grace to help in time of need," they will never be able effectually TO DEFEND THE GOSPEL.

THE time will not permit me to enlarge ; otherwise I might shew the happy influence which humility, meekness, patience and temperance in all things have in the prosecution of the ministerial work. I cannot forbear to mention CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE, however despised by some, as a cardinal virtue in the ministerial character. This is essentially different from that craft and policy which lead some men to adopt ANY MEASURES to gain popularity and to subserve their present interest. It consists in WISDOM AND SOUND JUDGMENT, whereby a minister is enabled to accommodate himself to the state and circumstances of his flock, and after the example of one who was eminent for his DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, to "become all things to all men," so far as he can with a good conscience, "that he may by all means save some." The want of PRUDENCE will cast a shade upon the brightest accomplishments, and involve a minister in many perplexities from which it may be difficult, if not impossible, to extricate himself.

THE subject will be closed with one or two obvious remarks, and those addresses which are usual on this occasion.

It is evident from the foregoing Discourse, that the work of a Gospel-minister is truly HONORABLE. To DEFEND and support the civil rights and liberties of mankind, and to emancipate them from tyranny and despotism, reflect a lustre on a man's character, and his name is transmitted with honor to succeeding generations. Is it not a more glorious work, to be instrumental of rescuing men from the dominion of sin and satan, and of vindicating them into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God?" Can that be thought a mean and ignoble work, in which the most illustrious personage who ever visited this earth was engaged; to which the holy apostles and many of the wisest and best men, in all ages, have devoted their time and talents? All the reproach and contempt which are cast upon the Gospel-ministry, must terminate upon the glorious Author of it. This is his own language, "He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.*"

FURTHER, as ministers are SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, they may depend on the great "CAPTAIN OF SALVATION" for all necessary aid, and for the reward of all their

* Luke x. 16.

faithful services. He has graciously promised to be with his faithful ministers, to the end of the world, to enlighten their minds, to inspire them with vigor and resolution in their arduous work, and to enable them to persevere in their holy course.—He has insured them a distinguished and glorious reward in the world to come, which will infinitely repay all their labors and sufferings in his cause. Though they should be poor and destitute in this world; though their endeavors to serve mankind in their most important interests, should, in many instances, prove unsuccessful, yet their divine Lord will view them with the most entire approbation and when He comes “to be glorified in his saints,” He will say to them, “Well done good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord.”

SUCH hopes and prospects, MY WORTHY FRIEND, will animate and support you in entering upon this important office. I am persuaded that you have examined the evidence on which the truth of the gospel rests, and that you have embraced this excellent system upon RATIONAL CONVICTION. AS YOU ARE NOW TO BE SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF IT, you will employ your utmost abilities to recommend it to the belief and acceptance of all men. Being, in the course of di-

vine Providence, fixed in this LARGE and POPULOUS TOWN, where your ministry will be attended by many persons of TASTE and REFINEMENT, your discourses must be correct and elaborate, and your whole time must be devoted to the business of your profession.

WITH a mind open to conviction, you will be ready to receive light from what quarter soever it may be reflected. Fully apprized that real religion does not consist in MERE SPECULATIVE OPINIONS, you will be ready to embrace, in the arms of your charity, all wise and good men.

It is happy for you, Sir, that being called so early in life to take the pastoral care of this LARGE SOCIETY, you can have the advice, counsel and assistance of a pious and excellent minister, who for so many years has been over them in the Lord.† His exact knowledge of the state of the flock, his experience and prudence may be of eminent advantage.

You will always treat him with that respect, tenderness and affection which his character and

† Rev. Mr. CARY, who has been settled about 20 years.

situation require, and continue to deserve that high esteem which he now entertains of you.

MAY you, for many years, be "a burning and shining light in this golden candlestick." May you always exhibit a bright example of those graces and virtues which you recommend to others. By your fidelity and diligence in the discharge of your duty, may you always approve yourself to the consciences of your hearers. May you serve God and your generation in such a manner as to secure the approbation of your own mind, and "when the chief Shepherd shall appear, may you receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away."

Brethren, beloved of this Church and Christian Society,

WITH extreme concern we beheld your amiable and faithful pastor taken off from his labors in the midst of his days, in the midst of his usefulness, while there was the fairest prospect of his rendering you essential service, and of promoting the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. This event is among the mysteries of divine Providence, which are, at present, above human investigation. His disinterested benevolence and love have been strikingly manifest-

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ed towards you in his chearful resignation of that LIVING which he was entitled to, during the remainder of his days. Your tendernefs, affection and generosity towards him, reflect the higheft honor on your character, and will be had in EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE.*

MAY God almighty ftill protract his precious life, and enable him, by his counfels and example, to promote the everlafting interefts of his beloved flock. May HE who has all difeafes at his command, fo reftore his health, that he may OCCASIONALLY difpenfe to you the word of truth and break the bread of life. May the remainder of his days be peaceful, joyous and happy; and may you finally meet him at the right of Chrift, and unite in the concert of angels and glorified fpirits in the celebration of the praifes of God and the Lamb.

UNFEIGNED gratitude is due to the God and Father of all, that HE has heard your prayers, and fucceeded your endeavors in obtaining another paftor, who, we truft, will alfo be “after his own heart.”—Receive him as a precious afcenfion-gift of our glorious Lord. Attend upon his miniftrations with diligence and candor.

* See the Letters annexed to the Rev. Dr. TUCKER’S Sermon at the Faft, previous to the choice of a Minifter.

“Despise not his youth.” “See that he be with you, without fear, for he worketh the work of the Lord.” Cultivate, with the most assiduous care, that harmony, peace and love, which have heretofore shed their benign influences upon you. Exercise all that condescension and tenderness towards one another, which the Gospel recommends. For many years to come, may you rejoice in the faithful labors of this servant of Christ, to whom the care of your souls is now to be committed. May he always share that esteem, affection and support, which his worthy predecessors in office have received from you. May you and your children be heirs with him of the grace of life, and be trained up for the immortal joys of the kingdom of God.

IN fine, may we all who are now assembled on this important occasion, improve our talents and opportunities for the glory of God, and our own everlasting happiness. May those of us who are SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL, employ the utmost diligence and zeal in prosecution of this noble work.

My Fathers and Brethren,

WE serve a glorious Master, who will amply reward all our faithful labors. Let us remem-

ber that the time is short and uncertain. Our days are passing with amazing velocity. May we therefore act, in all our ministrations, under the powerful impressions of our approaching change, and "watch for souls as those who must give account."

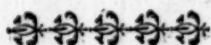
MAY all classes of people esteem the religion of Jesus as worthy of the most cordial acceptance. Let them attend the ministry of the word with diligence, candor, and a sincere desire of spiritual advantage. Let them seriously consider the solemn account which they must give to the Lord of all, for the distinguishing advantages which they now enjoy.

MAY WE ALL BE KEPT BY THE
POWER OF GOD, THROUGH
FAITH UNTO SALVATION.

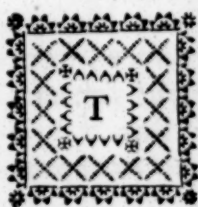
A M E N.



T H E
C H A R G E,
GIVEN BY
THE REV. MR. S H U T E
O F
H I N G H A M.



DEAR SIR,



T H E work, to which you have devoted yourself, and are now solemnly separated, in the ordinary scriptural method, by prayer with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, is sacred and important; it is the work of the gospel-ministry, into which, with this solemnity, you are introduced, that with regularity and order, you may perform all the duties of a minister of the gospel, wherever in providence you may be called, and in particular, among this people, whose election of you to this purpose as colleague-pastor with

the Rev. Mr. CARY, together with your consent, forms a special relation between you and them.

FROM a private station you are hereby elevated to the high rank of an Ambassador of the first officer in God's spiritual kingdom, to negotiate the interesting concerns of reconciliation between him and sinful men. Your authority, as well as ours, is derived from the great Head of the church, for we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech sinners by us ; it is our part, therefore, to pray them, in Christ's stead, and by every argument to press them, to be reconciled to God.

THIS high advancement, with the duties and trials attending it, demands your most serious attention and firmest resolution ; for, in proportion to the dignity of your office and to the discharge of the duties belonging to it will be your final sentence. If you are a wise and faithful servant, you will hereafter be honored with the approbation and applause of your Master, and have the happiness to hear announced from his mouth, *well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord* : But, if you are negligent and unfaithful, *you will have your portion with hypocrites and unbelievers*, as deserving the greatest dishonor and severest punishment.

WE therefore wish to engage your attention to the present solemn and interesting transaction, and to urge you *to take heed to the ministry which you have thus received in the Lord, that you fulfil it.*

DILIGENCE in the further acquisition of those accomplishments that may qualify you for this purpose, prudence will dictate as your first care; hereby to lay a foundation for the discharge of the duties of your office, with reputation and safety to yourself, and with advantage to others: *Give therefore your attendance to reading—to reading the holy scriptures, and also to reading books of human composition: But, in the use of all means for improvement in knowledge, judge for yourself; call no man master on earth, for one is your Master in heaven, even Christ; to his dictates pay a sacred regard; search the scriptures for they testify of him, and shew the way to that salvation you are to offer to sinners.*

THE greater your attention to the gospel is, the less will you be in danger of being misled, by the scholastic distinctions and wild notions of imperfect and fanatic men. With a mind divested of prepossessions, open to the admission of the evidence of truth, and removed from a servile dependence on the decisions of the GREAT and GOOD, you ought assiduously to search out the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, which you are to preach to others; and to be unwearied in the noble pursuit, that you may be thoroughly furnished for your business, and that you may not put off to your people, any impure mixture of your own with the word of truth, *or teach for doctrines the commandments of men; but as a scribe well instructed to the kingdom of heaven, may bring out of your treasure things new and old, and for the guidance and edification of your hearers*

may hold forth the word of life in its purity, and preach the gospel in its simplicity and power.—With the apostle, you are to *preach Christ crucified*, and the doctrines which stand in a close connexion with this important truth, all which are *according to godliness*, and tend to promote practical religion in the world.

YOUR trust is indeed great and big with the future fates of men; and your concern, as a *steward of the mysteries of God to be found faithful*, will be in proportion to the sense in your own mind, that you *watch for souls as one who must give account*.

To give energy to your instructions, and make them the more efficacious, the gospel you preach to others must, on your part, be adorned with a blameless and exemplary life. The impression which gospel truths have made upon your mind, will naturally be productive of this happy effect, so necessary with advantage to support the ministerial character and to answer the purpose of its institution. Your example will be more noticed by men in general, and be more influential upon them, than the example of any christian in a private capacity; and, according as it shall be good or bad, will render your instructions more or less impressive and beneficial: A regard to the honor of your Lord, and the good of souls, ought then to lead you to vigilance and circumspection; that you may, not only, do nothing whereby your usefulness may be obstructed, but deport yourself in such a manner as shall give weight and energy to the truths you deliver. *Be thou therefore a pattern*

of good works, in the exemplification of all the graces and virtues enjoined by the great Author of our holy religion; and let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

THE service, to which you have devoted yourself, you are to remember, is not without its peculiar trials, which it is your duty to bear with fortitude and perseverance. Your Master's *kingdom is not of this world*; you therefore are not to amuse yourself with the expectation of worldly emoluments—of dividing the spoil with the rich, the honorable and the great; but to prepare yourself for the secular inconveniences that attend your profession.—As a minister of the Gospel, you will meet with many things of a humiliating nature, from the humour and prejudices of an unfriendly world. By *the many*, whose minds are unimpressed with a sense of the moral fitness of piety, and are, at least indifferent to the devotional part of religion, you may expect, like your great Master, to be lightly esteemed. For your fidelity, in exposing the vices of men and urging them to a better temper and practice, you may also expect to be compensated, with obloquy and reproach, by *some*, and to be accounted their enemy, because you tell them the truth.

BUT, in proportion to the degree of your self-denial and patient sufferings in the cause of Christ, will be your future reward. With a ready and firm mind, therefore, *be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel. Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Let none of*

these things move you, neither count your life dear unto yourself, so that you may finish your course with joy, and the ministry, which you have received of the Lord Jesus Christ to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.

A LITTLE reflection on the imperfection incident to human nature, in its best state, must convince you, that your dependence ought not to be upon yourself to go through this arduous work, but on Him, whose you are, and whom you serve; and here you are encouraged to depend, by his most gracious and animating promise to his apostles and to all after them, unto whom should be committed the word of reconciliation: *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Be thou therefore strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

By this voluntary and solemn dedication of yourself to God, in the service of his Son, you are set for the defence of the gospel, and are under the highest obligation to endeavour to promote its interest among men: *Neglect not therefore the gift that is in thee; but keep, and execute with fidelity, that which is committed to thy trust. We charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead, at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine—in doctrine shew uncorruptness, gravity and sound speech that cannot be condemned, and by manifestation of the truth, commend yourself to every man's conscience—shun not to declare all the counsel of God, and study to shew thyself approved*

to him, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Take heed to thyself—to the state of your own mind; and see to it that your heart be right in the sight of God—that you are savingly impressed with the truths—that you cultivate the graces and exemplify the virtues you preach. To this point, your own safety will fix your attention, lest by any means when you have preached to others, you yourself should be a cast-away.

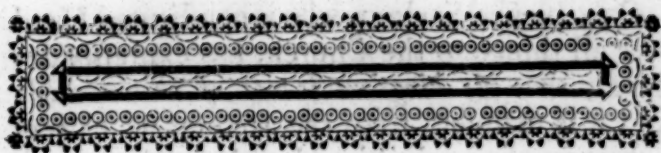
THAT in your common intercourse with men, your behaviour may correspond to the design of your public character, keep in view the direction of our Lord to the first ministers of his religion, and to all after them, who should be employed in the same work: *Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.* Let prudence and innocence mark your general deportment, that no man may have occasion to despise thy youth. *Be thou an example to believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

THAT you therefore may execute this great trust to your own peace and final security, and to the edification and happiness of others, *take heed to thyself and to thy doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*

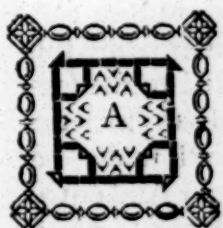
BUT if, from an attentive view of the labours and trials attending this *sacred office*, you should be ready to suspect your own ability, and to exclaim, *who is sufficient for these things?* your pensive mind may be relieved, by recollecting

that the grace of God, which he is ever ready to afford to his faithful servants, is sufficient for you. And be assured, Dear Sir, that a constant intercourse with heaven by a life of piety and virtue, and a firm dependance upon the kind and unfailing promises of our common Master, will lighten your burdens, give vigour to your exertions, and facilitate your work : And, if, with unwearied assiduity and persevering fortitude, you pursue the great end of your ministry, that, *when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

A M E N.



T H E
R I G H T H A N D
O F
F E L L O W S H I P,
G I V E N B Y
T H E R E V. D O C T O R T U C K E R
O F
N E W B U R Y.



S that part of the public services of this day, which is commonly called, GIVING THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP, is assigned to me, I may be allowed, I presume, to introduce it, by a brief attempt to point out its reasonableness and propriety, as arising from the nature of Christian Societies, and the intention of that significant ceremony.

OUR blessed Saviour, who is constituted Head over all things to the Church, has expressly declared, that *his kingdom is not of this world*: And it is manifest, from the account we have of it, that is, of the christian church, in the gospel, that in some particular things especially, it is essentially different from all earthly kingdoms, or human political institutions,

Its frame and constitution are immediately of divine original, and not left to human wisdom and policy. Its officers, their rank and station, their business and employments, are expressly declared in the gospel; and the qualifications, privileges and duties of the subjects of that kingdom, are there particularly prescribed; so that no man, nor body of men, of what station or character soever, have authority to make alterations in its constitution and laws, to appoint new officers in it, or to make any thing a qualification or duty of its subjects, which Christ has not made so.

AND, from this peculiar nature of the christian church, several things manifestly result, of great importance to its peace and welfare: As equality among all its members, they being subjects of the same Lord, and entitled to the same privileges—equality among christian societies, as parts of the same body, united under one Head, and subject to the same laws: And equality among Gospel-Ministers, as servants of the same divine Master, having the same trustments committed to them, and being employed in the same work. *One is their Master, even Christ, and all they are brethren.*

AND this singular nature of the kingdom, or church of Christ, in which it essentially differs from the kingdoms of this world, seems to be the true basis of that friendly and brotherly communion, harmony and love among christians, among particular churches, and among ministers, which was designed to distinguish them from the rest of the world, as the disciples of the benevolent Jesus, and to be their common band of union: For, it is obviously and directly calculated to curb and suppress that lust of superiority, and spirit of domination, which was early seen and early checked by our Saviour, in the aspiring temper of some of his immediate disciples; and the unlawful gratification of which, since that time, hath rent the church into pieces, shed the blood of some of the best of men, and been the inlet to infinite evils.

BEING equally the servants of Christ, and subjects of his kingdom, no one christian, nor any number of christians, can have dominion over others, in things pertaining merely to conscience, and their future and eternal happiness.

NONE have authority to judge their brethren, and to set at naught their brethren, because of non-conformity to them, in things not essential to their character as christians; or because their understandings and consciences are not of the same size and complexion with their own.

FOR *who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master, and not to this or that fellow-christian, be standeth or falleth.*

THE appeal here must for ever lie, not to any human judicatory, but to Christ, the Head and sole Legislator and Judge in his own kingdom, and to the gospel, as containing the divine plan, the constitution and laws of it.

ALL therefore, who, according to the gospel, appear to be the servants of Jesus Christ, we are to esteem and treat as such, and as, equally with ourselves, entitled to christian privileges. And all, who, according to this, appear to have the qualifications of Christ's ministers, and are regularly separated to the sacred office, we are to acknowledge as such, and as equal to any of their brethren in office and dignity.

AND, it is upon this foundation, and in conformity, as we apprehend, to scripture pattern, that we give the right hand of fellowship to one another; thereby acknowledging our common equality, as servants of Christ, and ministers of his word—our brotherly-love and affection, and mutual concern for each other's prosperity and success in the service of the gospel.

AND it is, Sir, upon this foundation, and with such apprehensions and sentiments as these, that, at the desire of the churches met here in council, on the present solemn occasion, and in the name of my Reverend Brethren, the pastors of them, I now give you my Right Hand.

By this sign we publicly acknowledge our satisfaction in your ministerial qualifications—in the regularity and validity of your sacred investiture, and own you as a minister of Jesus Christ, equal in office with ourselves.

By this sign we publicly receive and embrace you as a brother, and fellow-labourer in the work of the gospel-ministry, assuring you, that we shall be ready to assist and encourage you in your work, while we expect the same kind offices from you, as there may be occasion.

By this sign we also congratulate you, on the honor you have now received from the great Head of the church, and welcome you into the service of our common Lord : for, we now receive and embrace you, Sir, not as a disciple of Luther, or Calvin, or Arminius, or of any other celebrated instructor of more modern times, but as a disciple of Jesus, expecting you will call no man master upon earth, because he alone is your Master in heaven.

WE claim, therefore, no authority to prescribe to you in your ministry—we mean not to impose upon you our particular sentiments, as having any dominion over your faith, or to engage you to teach the doctrines and religion of a party, but the RELIGION OF JESUS, as contained in the gospel ; which, we trust, you will study and examine, with that freedom and liberality of mind, and with that close attention and seriousness, which a revelation and scheme of religion, dictated from heaven, and in which our greatest and dearest interests are concerned, highly merit.

THE same liberty of searching the scriptures—of understanding and believing for ourselves, which we claim, we readily yield to you, as a servant of Christ, and equally accountable, with us, to our common Lord.

AND finally, Dear Sir, we mean, by this sign, to express our affectionate concern, and hearty good wishes for you, that you may act your part well, as a minister of the gospel—that you may be a burning and a shining light in the church of God, and particularly in this place—that your labors may be attended with abundant success, to your own great encouragement and comfort—to the honor of God and the Redeemer, and to the joy and happiness of this people; and that hereafter, you may receive that approbation of your divine Master: *Well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful—enter into the joy of thy Lord.*

WILL THIS CHRISTIAN SOCIETY INDULGE ME NOW IN ADDRESSING MYSELF PARTICULARLY TO THEM, IN A FEW WORDS.

Beloved Friends and Brethren,

It is with mingled grief and joy we attend, at your request, the solemnities of this day. We cannot forget, nor will you, our dear brother, the REVEREND MR. CARY, who, for a course of years, alas! that they were so few, served you in the ministry of the gospel.

We rejoiced with you, in his excellent accomplishments for that important station and employment: and, from his age, and the apparent strength and firmness of his constitution, we hoped, with you, for his long continuance, as a rich blessing to his people.

BUT, what a melancholy alteration in his state and yours! *How is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed!*

WE very feelingly sympathized with your beloved pastor and with you, under that affecting dispensation of divine Providence, which suddenly,† and in the midst of his days, of his strength and usefulness, incapacitated him for public service, and deprived you of his important labors.

BUT, blessed be God, his life is spared, and he is not become, as he greatly feared, wholly useless among you.

You have had, and still have, the benefit of his advice, of his counsel and prayers: and may it not be presumed, without just offence to any, that it is owing, in some good measure, to his judicious and salutary influence, that you have been so remarkably, and happily kept together, in your broken state, and conducted so speedily, and with so much peace and harmony, to your present settlement?

AND, from his constant solicitude for your welfare, because you are dear unto him, and his friendly and generous exertions to forward what has now taken effect, we must conclude, that, amidst some melancholy reflections, he is a partaker with you, in the joy of this day, and feels his heart refreshed in the accomplishment of his wishes.

WE, therefore, though his infirmities forbid his being present with us, congratulate both him and you on the important event.

† On Lord's day, *March 9th*, 1788, Mr. CARY, after having preached in the morning, was seized with a disorder, supposed to be of the paralytic kind, which rendered him incapable of further prosecuting his public ministry, being then in the 43d year of his age, and 20th of his ministry.

WE partake with you, brethren, in the joy and gladness of your hearts, that, after the heavy gloom you have been under, the day has now again brightened upon you, in the prospect that your religious advantages will be continued without interruption, and the hope, that the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom will be promoted among you.

AND now, may the gracious presence of God, and his divine influence, be continually with you and with your Pastors—May the Elder of these be still dear to you, as he deservedly has been; and the Younger, who has this day publicly and solemnly devoted himself to the service of God, and of your souls—May he, by his judicious and useful labors, and good conversation in Christ, more and more merit your esteem and affection, and be, long continued a blessing to you and to your offspring.

AND viewing it as a very favorable circumstance that he is connected in the ministry, with one so able to assist him by wise and prudent counsel and advice, may he be encouraged and animated in his difficult and arduous work, and prove an happy instrument, in the hand of God, of your edification in christian knowledge, in faith and holiness, and of guiding and encouraging you in the way to eternal life and blessedness.

WITH these warm and earnest wishes, we now commend you all, both pastors and people, unto God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.



